

Let Justice Roll (2): You Only Have I Chosen

(Amos 3)

I. Introduction

- A. For about 15 years after I came, we had an important Denbigh church tradition
 - 1. Every Sunday afternoon in the fall, a group would play touch football
 - 2. When we started playing, I was usually chosen first when we picked teams
 - a. OK, it sometimes was Chuck Ragland. Or Lee Hale. Or that Marine kid.
 - b. So at least some of the time I was chosen first; it's kinda nice to chosen
 - c. The last time we played, I was 45, fat, and slow... and was chosen LAST (*Well, there was one player chosen after me... but I can't remember her name!*)
 - 3. So what's the point of this ramble down memory lane? *Responsibility*
 - a. When you're chosen, there is responsibility comes with being chosen
 - b. At lot expected of the #1 draft choice; so that means you must deliver
 - c. You can't have honor of being chosen w/o corresponding responsibility
- B. Israel was the special chosen people of God in the Old Testament (**Deut 7:6**)
 - 1. God tells them that he didn't choose them because of their own goodness
 - a. God didn't choose them because of the number, power or faithfulness
 - b. **Moses:** They were chosen because of God's faithfulness (**Duet 7:7-8**)
 - 2. Israel took pride in being the chosen— future was protected & guaranteed
 - a. They dismissed Jeremiah's warning with, "*Temple of Lord...*" (**Jer 7:4**)
 - b. Jesus, "*Truth set you free*" Jews, "*We are children of Abram*" (**Jn 8:33**)
 - c. The saw "*The Day of the Lord*" as God's judgment on enemies (**Amos 5**)
 - 3. They wanted the blessing of being the chosen without the responsibility
- C. We continue today our study of the of the book of Amos—"Let Justice Roll"
 - 1. Last week, Amos began by condemning the neighbors of Israel for their sin
 - a. Before Israel could enjoy this denunciation, Amos drew target on them
 - b. Israel was the special chosen people of God, his special covenant nation
 - 1) The God who judges nations would also judge Israel—more severely
 - 2) With the blessing of being chosen comes responsibility to live chosen
 - 2. In our text in **Amos 3**, God points to Israel choosing and their judgment

II. You Only Have I Chosen ([Amos 3:1-2a](#))

- A. God now speaks in the first person; Amos is only a conduit for God's words
 - 1. It is clear that these are words of judgment; twice God says “*against you.*”
 - a. The stage was set in chapter 2 as Amos registered God's complaint
 - b. God will judge the nations (Gentiles), but he will also judge his chosen
 - 2. The word “*chosen*” in the NIV, NASB, NET, NCV is the Hebrew word *yada*
 - a. Literally it means “*to know.*” That's how its translated in KJV, ESV, NRSV
 - 1) That doesn't mean that God did know about the other nations
 - 2) Fact God lists their sins ([Amos 1-2](#)) means He was well aware of them
 - b. But this is a special know, “*I have been intimate with you alone*” (NLT)
 - 1) God chose Israel as special people to be “*light to nations*” ([Isa 42:6](#))
 - 2) There were a lot of perks that came with job—land, nation, Messiah
 - 3. That's why Israel was totally unprepared for rest of the verse ([Amos 3:2b](#))
- B. When Amos focuses on God's chosen people, we'd better take notice
 - 1. All those promises of being a chosen people are applied to the church
 - a. [Eph 1:4-5](#)- “*For he chose us in him before the creation of the world...*”
 - b. [Col 3:12](#)- “*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved...*”
 - c. [1 Peter 1:1-2](#) “*who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God?*”
 - 2. So God has chosen us! An amazing idea... until you try to fully grasp it!
 - a. What's the relationship between God choosing us and us choosing God?
 - 1) God chose us, in fact that choosing was predestined ([Eph 1:11](#))
 - 2) But Bible also in effect tells us we must choose God ([2 Cor 5:20](#))
 - b. So we are the chosen people, and we choose to be part of chosen people
 - 3. **Point:** If we are chosen, we must live that way. *Context of verses we saw.*
 - a. [Eph 1:4-5](#)- “*For he chose us in him... to be holy and blameless in his sight*”
 - b. [Col 3:12](#)- “*clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness*”
 - c. [1 Pet 1:1-2](#)- “*God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit*”
 - 4. Verses that stress our identity as “*the chosen*” stress our responsibility
 - a. God gives us a great blessing to be called his specially chosen children
 - b. But that blessing has with it responsibility—to live like chosen people

- C. Amos stresses this in series of questions from God (**Reading: [Amos 3:3-8](#)**)
1. This is dramatic series of rhetorical questions-- the answer to each is “No”
 - a. Do we walk together without agreeing to so? Are bird trapped w/o trap?
 - b. Does a lion roar before he has prey? Does a trumpet sound without fear?
 2. No! And neither does God act without warning His people thru prophets
 - a. All of these questions emphasize that Amos’s message is not his own
 - b. He isn’t making this stuff up—all of this is all the decree of God
 3. Elizabeth Achtemeier suggests three theological points seen in Amos’ list
 - a. **First**, God is portrayed as a lion that has pounced (**[Amos 3:4,8](#)**)
 - 1) Amos began his book, “*The LORD roars from Zion*” (**[Amos 1:2](#)**)
 - 2) But the lion roar after it catches its prey— so Israel is already caught
 - a) Israel saw herself as more prosperous and free than she’d been before
 - b) Geddie: “*Things that Israel supposes are blessings are devouring her*”
 - b. **Second**, this affirms God’s absolute sovereignty over history (**[Amos 3:6](#)**)
 - 1) Do events of history take place by our planning and random chance?
 - 2) Of course! But over it all God reigns; ultimately God is in control
 - a) Are we doomed by new administration, financial crisis or ongoing war?
 - b) Not if God is the Lord of history and Sovereign over the nations.
 - 3) Israel thought all is well; we think all is coming apart... God is God!
 - c. **Third**, Amos points to God’s incredible mercy to his people (**[Amos 3:7](#)**)
 - 1) Amos job wasn’t to gloat over Israel’s eminent demise but warn them
 - 2) God is not holding us over hell waiting for reason to destroy us
 - a) God longs for his people to be saved; that’s the point of the prophets
 - b) Ultimately God hung that message of his desire to save on a cross!
 4. This leads to the point of Amos’ message— **coming great destruction.**
 - a. **First**, prophets can speak in poetry and analogy, but this is **plain** (**[3:11](#)**)
 - b. **Second**, when God gets through, won’t be much left of Israel (**[3:12](#)**)
 - c. **Third**, Israel’s false religion and prosperity will not help them (**[3:13-15](#)**)
 - 1) Religious system Jeroboam set-up in Dan/Bethel would be destroyed
 - 2) Prosperity Israel mistakenly saw as God’s favor will also be destroyed

III. Conclusion

- A. So... what's the point? What is the message of this text for you and I today?
1. It's easy to take texts like this and make precisely the wrong application
 - a. **Historical:** A chronicle the demise of obscure country in ancient near east
 - b. **Political:** We must work to get our country back to be Christian a nation
 - c. **Ecclesiastical:** Church must rid itself of all human institutions & worship
 2. No, God says through Amos to you personally, "*You only have I chosen*"
 - a. You personally are the chosen, favored child of God (**1 John 3:1**)
 - b. Paul says that we are dearly loved and chosen (**1 Thess 1:4**, NLT)
 3. In Wm P. Young's The Shack, Mack is invited to meet God at the shack
 - a. It was at this shack that Mack's little girl Missy was murdered
 - 1) Mack is overwhelmed by "*Great Sadness*" and God meets him there
 - 2) God says "*I am especially fond of you.*" He says it to all his children!
 - b. True! He is especially fond of you! You are his beloved child, his chosen
- B. But God doesn't tell us that so we can just bask in the glow of his goodness
1. The most dramatic text on being chosen by God is **Romans 8:28-39**
 - a. Does that not stir our hearts? If God is for us, who can be against us!
 - b. Who will bring a charge against one of whom God is especially fond?
 - c. No power on earth or hell itself can ever separate from the love of God
 - d. In Christ, we are more than conquerors of all the world can throw at us
 2. So what are we supposed to do? Sing Kum-By-Ya and feel warm-n-fuzzy?
 - a. No, Paul says we are called or chosen "*according to his purpose*" (**8:28**)
 - b. We were "*predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son*" (**8:29**)
 3. So what if we are the chosen but then **refuse** to conform to be like Jesus?
 - a. What if we refuse to be like Jesus in how we see money, make sexual choices, in racial prejudices, in our love for others, in our love of God
 - b. What happens is that Amos clears his throat, says, "*I'm talking to you*"
 - 1) You are chosen child if whom God is especially fond—***live like it!***
 - 2) We can't revel in identity of the chosen without living a chosen life!
- C. Will you tell Jesus today, "*I am coming Lord*" One day he is coming for you!